

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MANILA 4876

CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD

E O 11652: GDS
TAGS: MARR, RP, US
SUBJ: PROPOSED KOREAN AIR FORCE VISIT TO CLARK AB

REF: CINCPAC 0200422 (NOTAL)

1. REFTEL REQUESTS OUR VIEWS ON HOW BEST TO OBTAIN PHILIPPINE APPROVAL FOR FIVE ROKAF OFFICERS AND ONE JUSMAG-KOREA OFFICER TO VISIT CLARK AB. THE PURPOSE OF THE VISIT WOULD BE TO OBSERVE COPE THUNDER EXERCISES AT THE CROW VALLEY RANGE WITH A VIEW TOWARD DEVELOPING A SIMILAR RANGE AND EXERCISE IN KOREA.

2. THE APPROPRIATE FIRST STEP FOR SECURING PHILIPPINE APPROVAL FOR SUCH A VISIT WOULD BE FOR THE KOREAN GOVERNMENT TO INSTRUCT ITS EMBASSY TO APPROACH THE GOP ON THE MATTER. THE GOP WOULD NEXT BE REQUIRED TO CONSULT WITH US. IT SHOULD BE BORNE IN MIND, HOWEVER, THAT ENCOURAGING
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THE ROK TO INITIATE SUCH A REQUEST COULD RAISE SOME PROBLEMS FOR THE GOP AND FOR US. THERE ARE SEVERAL FACTORS TO BE CONSIDERED HERE. IN THE FIRST INSTANCE, SOME IN THE GOP ARE SENSITIVE TO ANY APPEARANCE OF LINK-AGE BETWEEN THE PHILIPPINES AND THE KOREAN SECURITY EQUATION. THERE HAS LONG BEEN UNDERLYING CONCERN IN SOME PHILIPPINE CIRCLES THAT THE U.S. BASES HERE MIGHT SOMEHOW

DRAW THE PHILIPPINES INTO A CONFLICT WHICH MIGHT BREAKOUT IN NORTHEAST ASIA. A SECOND FACTOR CONCERNS OUR EFFORT TO REDUCE TO A MINIMUM THIRD COUNTRY USE OF THE BASES AT THIS TIME IN ORDER TO AVOID STATUS OF FORCES COMPLICATIONS IN THE ONGOING BASE NEGOTIATIONS (CONVINCING SINGAPORE TO SHELVE FOR THE TIME BEING ITS PROPOSED A-4. TRAINING PROJECT AT CLARK IS AN EXAMPLE), A THIRD FACTOR, WHICH IS SOMEWHAT DEEPER IN THE BACKGROUND, INVOLVES THE INTEREST OF SOME IN THE GOP IN DEVELOPING A RELATIONSHIP WITH PYONGYANG IN ORDER TO IMPROVE PROSPECTS FOR THE PHILIPPINES BEING ADMITTED TO THE NON ALIGNED CONFERENCE WHICH MAY BE HELD THERE IN 1979. THE APPEARANCE OF GOP/ROK COOPERATION ON MILITARY MATTERS WOULD HAMPER ANY EFFORTS IN THIS DIRECTION.

3. GIVEN THE FACT THAT THERE ARE THESE PROBLEMS AREAS AND ANTICIPATING THAT THE ROKAF TEAM WOULD PROBABLY LIKE WHAT IT SAW AT CROW VALLEY AND WANT TO SEND ADDITIONAL PEOPLE LATER FOR A MORE DETAILED LOOK, WE SEE A POTENTIAL FOR TROUBLE IF WE ENCOURAGE THE ROK TO SEEK GOP APPROVAL FOR THIS PROPOSED VISIT. SUGGEST THAT THE RED FLAG RANGE AT NELLIS AFB BE CONSIDERED AS A POSSIBLE ALTERNATIVE.
SULLIVAN

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